

CITY OF SAN JOSÉ, CALIFORNIA
Department of Planning, Building and Code Enforcement
801 North First Street, Room 400
San José, California 95110-1795

Hearing Date/Agenda Number
P.C. 02-07-05 Item No.
C.C. 02-15-05 Item No.

File Number
PDC04-096

Application Type
Planned Development Rezoning

Council District
6

Planning Area
Central

Assessor's Parcel Number(s)
261-33-038

STAFF REPORT

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Completed by: Erin Morris

Location: East side of Bush Street approximately 190 feet south of The Alameda

Gross Acreage: 4.2

Net Acreage: 4.2

Net Density: 66.25 DU/AC

Existing Zoning: A(PD) Planned
Development

Existing Use: Vacant Warehouse Building

Proposed Zoning: A(PD) Planned
Development

Proposed Use: 265 residential units

GENERAL PLAN

Land Use/Transportation Diagram Designation
Residential Support for the Core (25 DU+/AC)

Project Conformance:
☒ Yes ☐ No
☐ See Analysis and Recommendations

SURROUNDING LAND USES AND ZONING

North: Commercial

CG Commercial General and LI Light Industrial

East: Industrial & Cahill Station

LI Light Industrial

South: Residential

A(PD) Planned Development

West: Residential

A(PD) Planned Development

ENVIRONMENTAL STATUS

☒ Environmental Impact Report found complete February 1, 2000
☐ Negative Declaration circulated on
☐ Negative Declaration adopted on

☐ Exempt
☐ Environmental Review Incomplete

FILE HISTORY

Annexation Title: White Street District

Date: August 30, 1924

PLANNING DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION

☒ Approval
☐ Approval with Conditions
☐ Denial
☐ Uphold Director's Decision

Date:

Approved by: _____
☐ Action
☒ Recommendation

OWNER

Chris Kober
Cahill North LLC
2500 S. El Camino Real
San Mateo, CA 94403

DEVELOPER

Devin Hassett
Centex Homes
2527 Camino Ramon, Suite 100
San Ramon, CA 94583

PUBLIC AGENCY COMMENTS RECEIVED

Completed by: ELM

Department of Public Works

See attached memorandum

Other Departments and Agencies

See attached.

GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE

None received.

ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

BACKGROUND

The applicant, Cahill North LLC, is requesting a Planned Development Rezoning from A(PD) Planned Development to A(PD) Planned Development to allow 265 single-family attached residences on a 4.2 gross-acre site. The subject site is currently within an A(PD) Planned Development Zoning District (City File No. PDC98-027) that encompasses an approximately 10-acre site generally bounded by The Alameda to the north, Bush Street to the west, the now-vacated White Street & active railroad tracks to the east, and Laurel Grove Lane to the south. The existing zoning allows up to 455 multi-family residential units and approximately 2000 square feet of commercial uses. The zoning requires adaptive reuse of the Del Monte Plant 51 Buildings and District Manager's Office, which are located in the northern portion of the zoning boundary. Since the zoning was approved in 2000, the applicant has developed the southern portion of the site into 160 single-family attached residential units, and has completed improvements to the historic District Manager's Office. The District Manager's Office is currently used as the sales office for the new residential project adjacent to Plant 51.

Project Description

The existing zoning requires that the historic Del Monte Plant 51 Building be redeveloped in accordance with project-specific adaptive reuse standards, including height restrictions. The existing zoning restricts the maximum building height to 4 stories and 65 feet. The purpose of the subject Planned Development Rezoning is to modify the restrictions of the existing zoning to allow the developer, Centex Homes, to develop 265 single-family attached residences within 5 stories, and to allow certain building features to project above the 65-foot height limit.

Historic Resource Description

The Plant 51 complex of buildings, located near the southeast corner of The Alameda and Bush Street approximately 250 feet southerly of The Alameda, was constructed between 1914 and 1930. The complex is comprised of several large, contiguous but distinct buildings. The northern section of the complex, built around 1926, is constructed of un-reinforced red brick masonry in the Industrial Vernacular style. This section is a long rectangular two-story warehouse with a double-stepped parapet on the northern end. Concrete loading docks extend around the building, protected by wood and corrugated metal canopies. The central section of the east side of the building drops to one-story in height. The one-story central section on the western elevation has a gabled roof with the face divided by pilasters and a brick cornice. The interior of the northern section of the plant is a large empty warehouse that has numerous sliding metal doors operated by counterweights. The southern section of the Plant 51 building complex was originally the Griffin & Skelley plant constructed in 1914. The boiler room building is located between the Griffin & Skelley portion of the complex on the south and the 1926 “factory building” on the north.

In 1998, Plant 51 was evaluated by a historic consultant who concluded that the Plant 51 complex and District Manager’s Office are potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, the California Register of Historic Resources and as a City Landmark due to the intimate association with a significant pattern of agricultural and industrial development in the economy of Santa Clara Valley.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The project developer presented the project to the board of the Shasta Hanchett Neighborhood Preservation Association on November 23, 2004 and to the Historic Landmarks Commission on December 1, 2004. Notices of the public hearing before the Planning Commission and City Council were published, posted on the City of San Jose web site and distributed to the owners and tenants of all properties located within 500 feet of the project site. Staff has been available to discuss the project with members of the public.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

As part of the environmental clearance for the existing Planned Development Zoning District, the City Council adopted findings relative to the treatment of the historic resources on site. Specifically, the Council found that modification of the Plant 51 buildings would result in significant cultural resources impacts and acknowledged that while the required mitigations (including adaptive reuse of the Plant 51 complex) would reduce the significant environmental impacts of the project, the impact would remain significant and unmitigated. The Council adopted a statement of overriding considerations indicating that the benefits of the proposed project outweighed the significant impact on the historic resources.

An Addendum to the Final EIR for the original Planned Development Zoning was prepared for this proposal. The addendum concludes that the proposed minor modification to the building height limit will not result in any new significant environmental impacts beyond those addressed in the Final EIR entitled, "Cahill Station Project," certified on February 1, 2000, by City Council Resolution No. 69355.

GENERAL PLAN CONFORMANCE

This site is designated Residential Support for the Core (25 DU+/AC) and is within the Midtown Specific Plan area. The proposed adaptive reuse of the Del Monte Plant 51 Building is consistent with the General Plan goal of preservation of historically significant structures, considered irreplaceable resources, in order to promote a greater sense of historic awareness and community identity and to enhance the quality of urban living. The proposed modifications to the height limit will help facilitate the adaptive reuse of the structure.

ANALYSIS

The primary issue associated with this rezoning request is the impact of the proposed rezoning on the preservation and adaptive reuse of the historic Plant 51 buildings.

A report on the proposed changes prepared by preservation architects Carey and Company concludes that the allowance of an additional story is beneficial to the preservation of the structure because it allows the project's parking to be provided at grade with four stories of residential above. Provision of at-grade parking, rather than ground-floor residential units, allows most existing masonry openings, awnings, loading docks, and other historic elements (such as painted signage and metal work) to remain. Ground-floor residential uses would necessitate major modifications to the existing structure including removal of many ground-level building features to ensure adequate light and ventilation to the units.

The rezoning proposes to allow certain non-structural and uninhabitable elements to project above the building height limit of 65 feet. Specific elements include parapets, elevators, stairs, and screened mechanical equipment. At the Planned Development Permit stage, the project design will be reviewed by the Historic Landmarks Commission and staff to ensure that the rooftop elements are set back from the face of the building and do not affect the visual massing of the building.

Conclusion

Based on the above analysis, staff concludes that the proposed rezoning will help facilitate the preservation and adaptive reuse of the Plant 51 Buildings.

RECOMMENDATION

Planning staff recommends that the Planning Commission recommend that the City Council approve the subject rezoning for the following reasons:

1. The proposed project is consistent with the San José 2020 General Plan Land Use/Transportation Diagram designation of Residential Support for the Core (25+ DU/AC).
2. The proposed modification to the building height limit will facilitate the adaptive reuse of the Del Monte Plant 51 Building, consistent with the General Plan goal of preservation of historically significant structures.

Attachments

cc: Sue Dillon, MacKay and Somps
William Williams, The Steinberg Group